GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:932
ANSWERED ON:23.11.2001
IMPACT OF IMPORT OF FRUITS AND FRUIT GROWERS
SURESH CHANDEL

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

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(a) whether the domestic fruit growers particularly of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir are being adversely affected due to permission of import of apple and other fruits under Open General Licence; (

(b) if so, whether the Government have conducted any survey / study of this adversity; (

(c) if so, the steps proposed by the Government to save the domestic fruit growers from the adverse impact of import of fruits under OGL; and (

(d) the facilities being provided to fruit growers for the purpose of promoting export of apple and other fruits?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY)

(a) to (c) : Representations have been received from some fruit growers including the Government of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir regarding the likely adverse impact of imports on domestic fruit producers. Import restrictions on all the items including fresh fruits are being removed since 1991 in line with the economic liberalization policy and also in accordance with the country`s commitment to Multi-lateral trading regime.

However, the government is absolutely determined to ensure through appropriate use of tariff and other mechanisms that imports do not cause any serious detriment or injury to domestic producers. Towards that end, import duty on apple has already been increased from 35% to 50%. In addition, all primary agricultural products including fruits have also been made subject to a sanitary import permit to be issued by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation.

(d) : The Government has been implementing several assistance schemes and taken various steps to boost production and export of horticultural products including apples and other fruits. These include:-

(i) Grant of financial assistance for improved packaging, and strengthening of quality control including installation of latest ISO 9000/HACCP equipments at export units;

(ii) Grant of air freight subsidy for export of selected fresh vegetables and fruits.

(iii) Arranging promotional campaigns such as buyer-seller meets and participation in important international fairs and exhibitions;

(iv) Setting up of integrated cargo handling and cold storage facilities at various International Airports for handling export of perishable items such as fresh fruits and vegetables;

(v) Providing technical advisory services and other support services to, trade and industry including training of farmers for export production, quality control packaging, transport, etc.

(vi) Research efforts towards adoption of technologies for increasing the shelf life of fruits and vegetables such as Compressed/Modified Atmosphere containers for sea transport, establishment of vapour heat treatment facilities, etc. Kinnaur apple from Himachal Pradesh has been identified as one of the potential varieties for exports. Himachal Pradesh Marketing Corporation (HPMC) had undertaken trial shipment of Kinnaur apples through reefer container to United Kingdom.

(vii) Provision of assistance for using international standard packaging material specified through the Indian Institute of Packaging(IIP).Under this scheme assistance is given to exporters for use of packaging material specified and adopted by IIP/Agricultural Product Export Development Authority(APEDA).